

**At a Special Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Middletown,  
RI held at the Middletown Town Hall on Wednesday, May 21, 2014 at  
6:00 P.M.**

**Council President Christopher T. Semonelli, Presiding**

**Vice President Robert J. Sylvia**

**Councillor Richard P. Adams**

**Councillor Bruce J. Long**

**Councillor Paul M. Rodrigues**

**Councillor M. Theresa Santos**

**Councillor Barbara A. VonVillas, Members Present**

**POSTED – May 14, 2014**

**Wendy J.W. Marshall, Town Clerk**

**Town of Middletown**

**Town Hall – 350 East Main Road**

**Middletown, Rhode Island 02842**

**Dear Mrs. Marshall:**

**Pursuant to the provisions of Article II, Section 203 of the Town Charter and in accordance with Sections 42-46-2., 42-46-3., 42-46-4., 42-46-5 and 42-46-6., RIGL, I hereby call a Special Meeting of the Town Council to formally consider, discuss and vote upon the following items of business:**

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

**1. Memorandum of Finance Director, thru Town Administrator, re: FY2015 Operating Budget Ordinance Amendments as of May 14, 2014.**

**2. Public Hearing (Advertised)**

**An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (First Reading)**

**An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown General Fund, Parks and Recreation Fund, Sewer Fund and Refuse and Recycling Fund Appropriating revenues for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015, as amended”.**

**Said meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 21, 2014, at 6:00 P.M. at the Middletown Town Hall, 350 East Main Road, Middletown, Rhode Island 02842.**

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**Christopher T. Semonelli, President**

**Middletown Town Council**

**cc:**

**Town Council**

**School Department**

**Town Administrator**

**Senior Center**

**Town Solicitor**

**Police Dept.**

**Finance Director**

**Fire Dept.**

**Public Library**

**Public Works**

**Tax Assessor**

**Building Inspector**

**Town Planner**

**IT Director**

**Town Engineer**

**Human Resource Director**

**School Department**

**Recycling Coordinator**

**Substance Abuse Coordinator**

**This meeting location is accessible to the handicapped. Individuals requiring interpreter services for the hearing-impaired should notify the Town Clerk's Office at 847-0009 not less than 48 hours before the meeting.**

**On motion of Vice President Sylvia, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to receive said communication.**



**Superintendent Rosemarie Kraeger was present to respond to Council inquires.**

**1. Memorandum of Finance Director, thru Town Administrator, re: FY2015 Operating Budget Ordinance Amendments as of May 14, 2014.**

**On motion of Vice President Sylvia, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to receive said memorandum.**

**2. Public Hearing (Advertised)**

**An Ordinance of the Town of Middletown (First Reading)**

**An Ordinance in amendment to the ordinances of the Town of Middletown General Fund, Parks and Recreation Fund, Sewer Fund**

**and Refuse and Recycling Fund Appropriating revenues for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015, as amended”.**

**Public Hearing was declared open.**

**Council President Semonelli welcomed all who attended the Public Hearing. Mr. Semonelli explained that the budget proposal reflects a 2% tax increase.**

**Janine Brown, Niagra Street, addressed the Council reviewing the following email, entered here:**

**Erin Seiler, 155 Purgatory Road, addressed the Council reviewing the following email, entered here:**

**Chyleene O'Connor, 72 Beagle Drive, Special Education Coordinator,**

**noted that her position and programs may be cut, if the School request is not fully funded. Ms. O'Connor requests Council to consider fully funding the school budget request.**

**Kelly Ganser, 130 John Kesson Lane, addressed the Council reviewing the following email, entered here:**

**Council President Semonelli explained that the Council is listening to the residents and understands the importance of education in Middletown. The Council will continue to review the budget.**

**Vice President Sylvia noted that he hears the residents loud and clear and believes the school budget should be fully funded. Mr. Sylvia encourages his colleges to fully fund the school budget request.**

**Councillor Rodrigues requested Superintendent Rosemarie Kreager to elaborate on school project 'Lead The Way'.**

**Rosemarie Kraeger explained that Lead The Way is a pre-engineering program. The program is approximately \$60,000 funded with current resources and grants.**

**Councillor Rodrigues inquired what the tax increase would be if the school budget was to be fully funded.**

**Town Administrator Shawn Brown, responding to Councillor Rodrigues, noted that the increase would be approximately .8%; however he would work with the Tax Assessor to get the exact increase.**

**Councillor Adams noted concern with the overall tax increase explaining the need to look at the entire picture.**

**Councillor Rodrigues explained he would like to see what the additional tax increase would cost the residents. Mr. Rodrigues noted concern with revenue decreases including loss of impact aid.**

**Councillor Rodrigues explained that a balance needs to be created between the schools and the aging community.**

**Councillor Adams requests additional information regarding impacts on the schools, if the budget is not fully funded.**

**Liana Ferriera Fenton, 53 Berkeley Avenue, School Committee member, addressed the Council requesting a member of the Council attend a hearing on May 22, 2014 regarding H-7746 – A four year hold on funding formula – hold harmless.**

**Councillor Long noted that it is a tough year for schools not to receive necessary funding. Mr. Long noted agreement with Councillor Adams and inquired consequences if school request is not fully funded.**

**Councillor Santos noted support for the School budget as presented. Ms. Santos explained that the students are future leaders.**

**Vice President Sylvia noted that the Council has not been frugal, the monies can be found within the budget. Mr. Sylvia explained that the schools are an economic driver for the Town.**

**Councillor VonVillas noted her personal investment in the schools and believes education is an economic driver in the area. Ms. VonVillas requests information regarding the impact on the tax rate if the schools are fully funded.**

**Theresa Spengler, 1111 Wapping Road, Parent, Business Owner, Chair of Middletown School Committee and Educator, explained that she wants a better education for students. Ms. Spengler, as School Committee Chair, noted that the School Budget would get cut in many areas, what is cut depends on the bottom line number. If the budget request is not fully funded, there will be cuts.**

**Councillor Adams inquired loss of revenue from Group Home**

**Funding and impact aid reimbursement.**

**Superintendent Rosemarie Kraeger, responding to Councillor Adams, noted the numbers are solid, the Town will be losing an additional \$61,000, the reality is \$358,000.**

**Janine Brown, Niagra Street, addressed the Council noting that she is sure residents would not mind a slight tax increase. Ms. Brown explained she chose to live in Middletown because of the schools and the community will continue to be elderly, if money is not put into the School system.**

**Jennifer Hoelbesko, 102 Atlantic Drive, 4th Grade Teacher, addressed the Council noting that there is nothing extra to cut from the schools.**

**Darryl Brown, Niagra Street, addressed the Council explaining that he figures it will cost \$21.00 per person to make up the gap in the budget.**

**There being no other persons present desiring to be heard, public hearing remains open.**

**On motion of Vice President Sylvia, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to receive said ordinance on its first reading.**

**On motion of Vice President Sylvia, duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to adjourn said meeting at 7:00 pm.**

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**Wendy J.W. Marshall, CMC**



**Council Clerk**

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